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NBC BRIEFING

1 October 1957

PHILIPPINES

- I. Philippine election campaign is heating up as it enters home-stretch; voting is set for 12 November.
 - A. At stake will be presidency and vice presidency as well as 8 senatorial seats (out of 24) and all 102 seats of House of Representatives.
- II. President Carlos P. Garcia still seems to have inside track in field of four major presidential candidates.
 - A. This is due primarily to the advantages he holds as the incumbent, and to the fact that his Nacionalista Party is the most strongly entrenched political organization in the country.
- III. Garcia, however, has been an uninspiring candidate and is vulnerable to charges of corruption.
 - A. There are indications, for instance, of monkey business in the issuance of import and export licenses and Garcia henchmen have attempted to put the squeeze on local Chinese and American businessmen.

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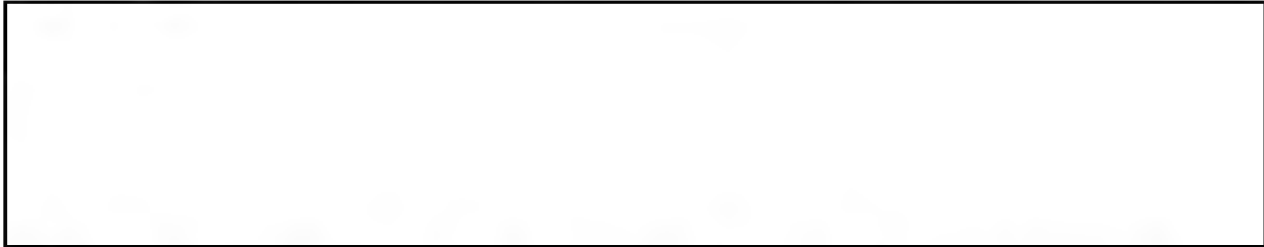


IV. Garcia has also allowed himself to be saddled with an unsavory running-mate in 45-year-old José Laurel, Jr., who often has parroted the anti-American sentiments of his father.

A. He is only one of six brothers to enter politics; was successful lawyer in father's firm before election to House of Representatives in 1941; became Speaker in '54; hopes for presidency in '61.

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B.



C. This reputation has solidified the Roman Catholic hierarchy against him, and several observers feel that Laurel may be defeated even if Garcia wins.

V. The opposition Liberal ticket of José Yulo and Diosdado Macapagal, while it has considerable strength on populous Luzon, appears to be making little, if any, headway.

A. Yulo is also proving to be a colorless candidate. The party's main attraction has been movie star Rogelio de la Rosa, a senatorial candidate, who is always the last speaker at party rallies.

B. The Liberals still bear the stigma of the corrupt Quirino regime and Yulo himself is under fire as a result of some of his financial transactions.

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C. Liberals are also being accused of dirty politics, such as putting up 3 obscure Garcias--one Carlos G.--for the presidency [] and of infiltrating Nacionalista ranks to cause embarrassing incidents.

VI. Emerging as possibly the major threat to Garcia is the candidate of the new Progressive Party, Manuel Manahan. (Vice-presidential candidate is businessman Vicente Araneta.)

A. Labeled by the Manila press as the "knight errant" of the Magsaysay crusade, Manahan has stirred unexpected public enthusiasm in many key areas.

1. Some observers say that a recent rally in Manila outdrew a similar Magsaysay affair in 1953.

B. Manahan forces, despite their identification with Magsaysay's policies, face stiff uphill fight to overcome such handicaps as lack of party organization, shortage of funds, and the power of local bosses-- most of whom are Nacionalista officials.

VII. The fourth candidate, ultranationalist Senator Claro Recto, has considerable support from influential nationalist circles, but is believed to lack the mass support to make him a serious threat.

A. His running-mate, Senator Lorenzo Tanada, however, is proving to be a stronger contender for the vice-presidency than was anticipated.

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